

**Minutes (Unofficial)**  
Maryland Council for New Americans  
Governmental Access Working Group  
Thursday, February 19, 2009  
16 Francis Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Annapolis  
2pm

**1. Welcome and introductions**

Attendees: Karla Silvestre, Kien Lee, Anis Ahmed, Wendell Sutton, Pat Hatch, Walter Lee, Raymond Skinner, Myron Quon, Joe Muth, Cheryl LaRoche, Anna White.

**2. Presentation of Maryland StateStat: Maryland government's performance measurement program**

StateStat analyst Mark Luckner provided an overview of the program, including the four statestat tenets which he recalled w/o notes: 1) Accurate and timely intelligence shared by all; 2) Rapid deployment of resources; 3) Effective tactics and strategies; and 4) Relentless follow-up and assessment. Working group members were interested in what measures can be developed for gauging levels of service for immigrant communities.

**3. What key areas for innovation and reform warrant our attention?**

After discussion, group agreed to break into the following three groups and prepare for the next meeting a summary of strengths and weakness for each area.

- a. **Data.** There is a strong need to improve regularity of **statewide demographic reporting**, like the Urban Institute report, but annually. Perhaps a partnership with the MD Department of Planning. There is also a need to be able to track immigrant participation by government agencies (employment centers, benefits, education, etc) to ensure we are meeting needs, etc. Race, gender, age are often tracked, but limited English, LPR, or naturalized citizen status is not. We therefore cannot be sure of our effectiveness as a government meeting our federal obligations. Health and education were areas specifically highlighted. *Subgroup consists of Cheryl, Karla, Kien and Adam.*
- b. **Language and Cultural Competence.** Language access is critical, and experience and studies (2002 UMD study was mentioned) suggest that access to language lines, translators, and compliance with various guidance (state language access law and Title VI) is uneven, at best. Front line personnel, at least, should also be appropriately hired and trained to ensure cultural competency, as the same expectation exists for other populations such as veterans, disabled, etc. *Subgroup: Myron, Anna, Pat, Laura, Joe.*
- c. **Outreach and Public Education.** In addition to translation, having language be 'understandable' to populations requires inclusion of a 'bottom-up' perspective to ensure that information will 'seep in' to targeted populations. Often information is available but is not well-communicated to the people who need it the most. Joe gave "Bull Roast"

example at St Matthews. Examples include civic engagement, benefits, crime reporting, etc. *Subgroup: Joe, Anis.*

**Compliance with Federal Standards:** the group agreed that we needed to improve our familiarity with Title VI compliance. *Pat and Myron* agreed to work together to find an authoritative person or resource for the next meeting.

4. Plan and timeline for preparing our recommendations for final report (August 3, 2009)

Group expects to have written report before June for full Council consideration. First, the group will analyze strengths and weaknesses of each, and present a summary at the April 7 Council meeting. Then the group will move toward identifying solutions and highlighting best practices.

5. Appointment of Chairperson

Kien Lee of Community Science was appointed Chairperson by the group.

6. Other business  
There was no other business.

7. Next meeting

The group agreed to **meet on March 19<sup>th</sup>, at 1pm.** Pastor Walter Lee offered his church for the next meeting place:

Bethel Korean Presbyterian Church  
3165 St. Johns Lane  
Ellicott City MD 21042  
410-461-1235 (Office)

The meeting adjourned at 4:15pm.

*From the Executive Order:*

**Governmental Access Working Group.** The Governmental Access Working Group will focus on how to improve accessibility of State and local government services to new

Americans. This will include an assessment of resources necessary for compliance with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements; an assessment of the availability of vital documents in other languages; and identifying best practices at the county, community, and municipal levels. This group is also charged with developing specific government wide StateStat measures to track capacity to serve these communities.